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February 7, 1978

Aaron Wildavsky  
President  
Russell Sage Foundation  
230 Park Avenue  
New York, N.Y. 10017

Dear Mr. Wildavsky: ✓

Thank you very much for sending me "urban outcomes." I was very much interested indeed to read the chapter on libraries. I wonder if there is any comparable information available at this time about the New York City public library system. Besides my nostalgic interest in the libraries, and the testimonial that I can offer about their importance as an educational instrument, it occurred to me that they would be an important index of the provision of opportunities. I particularly am concerned that the pressures on schools like Stuyvesant High School and Bronx High School of Science may be misdirected in a quite destructive way and that more leverage be available for the preparation of students for the mobility and the eventual opportunity that such high schools can offer. I would be willing to bet that the successful students are avid users of whatever library facilities are available even in relation to others of comparable income and cultural background. Of course, I may be retroreflecting without regard to many changes of the past thirty years; in particular I am told that library facilities within the public schools have taken over part of the functions of the City library system, but I have no direct check on that.

When I come to New York this September I am certainly looking forward to reestablishing connections with you and with the Foundation both personally and institutionally. I would particularly welcome ways in which I could help analyze the conjunction of expertise in the natural sciences that is quite abundant at Rockefeller University with the needs, social awareness, and complimentary expertise of your colleagues and local projects that may occur to you as pertinent.

Aaron Wildavsky

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There are certainly a number of steps along these lines that could be undertaken quite informally and I hope you would agree about the merits of further exploration along those lines.

If I could trouble you for the latest annual report of the Foundation and summaries of the projects you are supporting - I had some samples of such material about a couple of years ago - they would be helpful as prior briefing for further conversations to which I look forward.

Again, thank you for your courtesy in sending the book.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

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